Alberta
FORESTRY, LANDS
AND WILDLIFE

ROCKY-NORTH SASKATCHEWAN INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN
ANNUAL REVIEW [1986-87]

April 1988

EASTERN SLOPES
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE

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Highlights

Eastern Slopes Region, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife

ANNUAL REVIEW

OF THE ROCKY/NORTH SASKATCHEWAN INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN

The Annual Review for the Rocky/North Saskatchewan Integrated Resource Plan summarizes progress to date on the implementation of that plan. It is the first to be completed since the plan was approved in 1986, and covers 1986 to 1987. The following are highlights taken from the annual review.

o A forest management agreement was awarded to Pelican Spruce Mills on the O'Chiese Block of the Brazeau Timber Development area. Both coniferous and deciduous timber resources are being used.

o Over 100 000 fish have been stocked in planning area lakes over the past year. There are plans to stock considerably more in the upcoming year, particularly in Cow Lake.

o Four recreation facilities have been upgraded in the planning area. They include: Strachan, South Fork, Cow Lake and Mitchell Lake.

o Recreation use statistics indicate that nearly 40 percent of visitors to the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife recreation facilities live within the planning area boundary.

o 135 ha of old willow have been cleared to rejuvenate moose browse.

In addition, 700 bluebird nest boxes, 300 duck and hawk nest boxes and 30 bird feeders were constructed for installation by various school groups and clubs.

o The David Thompson Corridor Local Integrated Resource Plan is the forerunner to a refined, specific resource management and development plan for the appropriate uses of land within that corridor. The corridor extends approximately 3 km to each side of the David Thompson Highway. The plan will be completed during 1988. Full public review is an important component of the plan.

o Ten new range development projects were implemented during 1987.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Recently, the department outlined the basic policy under which ongoing management of integrated resource plans will occur. This document will be made available through the Regional Resource Co-ordinator upon request. (His address is given at the end of this newsletter). In addition, we have recently completed a document which outlines our methods for implementing the plan, as well as our first annual review. No significant amendments to

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the subregional plan have been received. We will be writing an annual review in April of each year until the major sub-regional plan review occurs.

COMMUNICATION

It is important that those of us involved in the day-to-day administration of the natural resources of this area keep the lines of communication open with the public. We will distribute this summary report to everyone involved in the Rocky/ North Saskatchewan Integrated Resource Plan Public Involvement Program. Also, we have developed an indepth annual review which gives details of our activities in this area over the last two years. This will be made available to the provincial building in Rocky Mountain House through Public Lands, Forestry, and Fish and Wildlife offices. It will also be made available through the Municipal District of Clearwater office and local towns. We ask you to look at this report and give us any comments you have as to its format or content. This is the same document that has been sent to our senior management in Edmonton. The report has not been edited for public use.

Should you not be able to visit these offices, we ask you to write to the Regional Resource Co-ordinator (address given below) and ask for a copy of the review.

Mr. Cam McGregor
Eastern Slopes Regional Resource Co-ord.
Box 1598
Rocky Mountain House, Alberta
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Telephone: (403) 845-8245

Please address any comments that you have about our annual review to Mr. McGregor.

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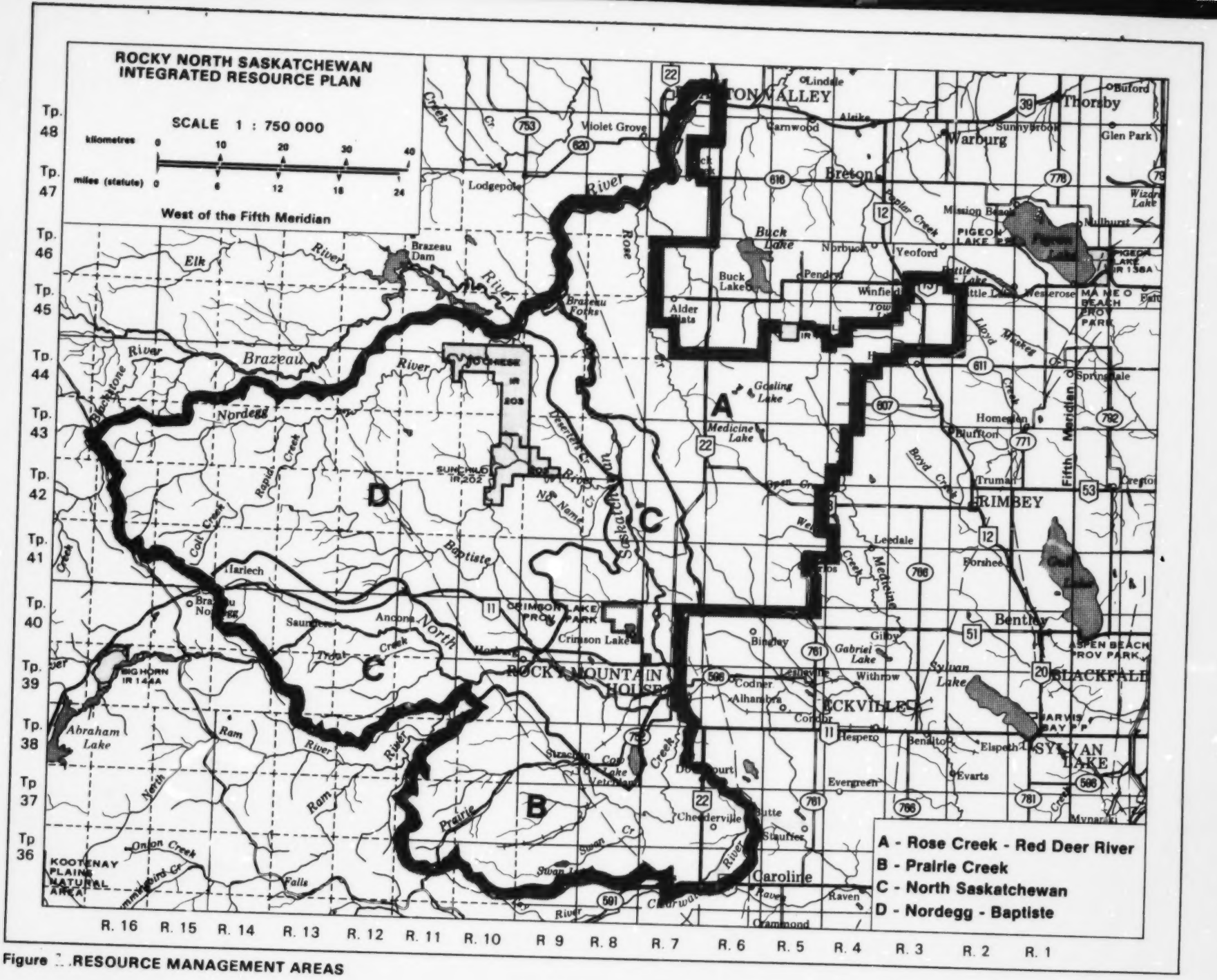

Figure 2. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes progress to date on the implementation of the Rocky-North Saskatchewan Sub-regional Integrated Resource Plan. The plan was approved by Cabinet on March 4, 1986. This is the first annual review to be completed since its approval and covers 1986 and 1987.

Identified in this report are completed projects, as well as those which have not been completed (and why) and provides some direction for the next year.

The report is intended for use by senior management within the Alberta Government, as well as the ultimate users of our service, the public of Alberta.

The resource sectors contained within the plan have been used to identify projects which have been undertaken or will be undertaken so that the plan may be accomplished. These have been documented in terms of management intent, results expected, results achieved and activities anticipated over the coming year. Geographic location of activities in the planning area are given by resource management area(RMA) in Figure 1.

It is hoped that producing this document on an annual basis will initiate long-term dialogue over the management of this area.

2. WATERSHED

Water is given primary importance in the Eastern Slopes Policy (1984) under which this plan was developed. The drainages of this planning area are of critical importance to the three prairie provinces.

Watershed programs are managed in this plan by the Alberta Forest Service(AFS) and Public Lands Division, Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife. The program functions are the collection of inventory data and the assessment of land use impacts on soil and water resources. The program works closely with Alberta Environment and the Fish and Wildlife Division on related issues and activities.

A) MONITORING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Watershed monitoring will occur within the planning area to gather baseline data on water quality, quantity and regime.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Monitoring of Indian and Buster creeks.	Point source sampling has replaced continuous monitoring and a better means of obtaining the management intent.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Point source sampling will be continued to determine sediment loading changes in areas with high land use activity.

B) LAND MANAGEMENT AND RECLAMATION

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Land use activities, which cause water quality, quantity or timing to vary, will be minimized.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Reduced land use disturbances.	1. As roads were developed, meetings were held with Alberta Transportation and Utilities to determine methods for erosion control. 2. Four pre-disturbance watershed assessments completed. 3. Approximately six erosion potential indexes completed on road crossings. 4. Applied ground rules to logging plans and other land uses and reviewed for annual operating plans.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

1. Complete pre-disturbance watershed assessments on most licenses.

2. Work with Pelican Spruce Mills on completing pre-disturbance watershed assessments for the remainder of its Forest Management Agreement Area.

3. Continue with erosion potential indexes.

C) MODELLING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

The level of vegetation manipulation, which would provide an acceptable balance between water yield and maintaining water quality, will be determined by watershed modelling. Vegetation manipulation (usually logging) does change water quantity but not water quality directly. Computer modelling of basins will be used to determine changes in annual water yield.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Small flow increases usually occur after logging. This model is used to ensure that logging will not detrimentally change annual water yield or streams channels.	This technique has been investigated during the last year and looks promising for watershed management.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Water yield simulations will be used as required.

3. SURFACE MATERIALS

Surface materials of the planning area are managed to provide opportunities for industry to explore and develop while maintaining the integrity of the area for future users.

Administration of the use of the resource is carried out by the Public Lands and Alberta Forest Service divisions of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife.

A) AGGREGATE (Sand & Gravel)

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To provide for the orderly exploration and development of surface materials.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Upon request, identify the location and extent of sand and gravel deposits through the aggregate inventory program of the Alberta Research Council in all areas except Zone 1.	The Alberta Research Council has completed an aggregate inventory which includes part of the eastern portion of the planning area.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Land management agencies will ensure orderly development within existing guidelines.

4. TIMBER

Maintenance of the forest land base and annual allowable cut of the planning area are the responsibility of the Alberta Forest Service. The responsibility also includes forest protection (against fire,insects and disease), reforestation and the administration of public land use throughout the forested portions of the planning area.

A) PROTECTION

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To protect forests in the area from fire, insects and disease through maintenance and adherence to a comprehensive fire management plan, the maintenance of an active forest inventory, and remedial action in the case of forest infestation.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To reduce wildfire to where it consumes less than .1% of the planning area on an annual basis (less than 7000 ha).	There were 30 wildfires in the area in 1987 which consumed 64 ha in total.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Established forest protection practices will be continued.

B) REFORESTATION

MANAGEMENT INTENT

All lands which are contained in the sustained timber land base of the planning area within are to be reforested seven years of harvest; earlier if watershed erosion potential is high.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To reforest all cutover areas within seven years after harvest.	A total of 1118 ha were treated in 1987. 600 ha were scarified and 715,000 seedlings were planted on a total of 518 ha.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

To continue to treat cutover areas to meet provincial reforestation stocking levels.

C) FOREST INVENTORY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To inventory timber resources on public lands in the White Area (the settled area of the province) to determine potential harvest levels.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To identify and ground-truth forest stands for species, age, condition and merchantability.	The lands to be inventoried have been identified. About 25 townships have been inventoried in or near the eastern boundary of the planning area to date.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Ground-truthing and final mapping should be completed over the next two years for lands affected by this plan.

D) USE

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To optimize use of the timber resource within the planning area and to increase the availability of timber for local use.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To have all quota holders make use of timber to a smaller stump and top diameter.	Quota holders in the planning area agreed to greater use by changing the measurements from 8 inch stump, 5 inch top to 6 inch stump, 4 inch top.
To promote development of the Brazeau Timber Development Area and to increase the allowable cut in the R5 and R7 management units for local use.	A forest management agreement was awarded to Pelican Spruce Mills on the O'Chiese block of the Brazeau TDA to use both coniferous and deciduous timber resources. Two deciduous timber allocations were sold to Pelican Spruce Mills in Management units R2 and R3. Coniferous quotas were sold to Tall Pine Timber Company in RJ and Rocky Wood Preservers, Dale Hansen and Centennial Lumber in R2. The annual allowable cut in R5 was established at 8200m3, and increased from 10,080 m3 to 25,000m3 in R7 for local use.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Complete the review of development proposals and award a forest management agreement on the Nordegg block of the Brazeau Timber Development Area.

E) INTENSIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To increase timber yield through intensive forest management techniques such as genetic improvement and thinning.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To make use of student fire fighting crews during periods of low hazard to thin overstocked stands of regenerated pine.	Student crews thinned a total of 27 ha of overstocked pine.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

The student fire fighting crew will be used to thin overstocked stands during periods of low fire hazard. Establishment of a forest genetics plot at Diamond Hill.

5. WILDLIFE

Wildlife is managed in this plan to provide a variety of recreational and commercial opportunities and to meet future demands for viable and diverse wildlife populations for a variety of species, including;

a) Ungulates
b) Furbearers
c) Scarce species.

Wildlife resources are managed by the Fish and Wildlife Division(F&W),Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife.

A) WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT/INVENTORY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To undertake wildlife management and inventory programs that will help ensure the maintenance and/or increase of viable and diverse wildlife populations within the planning area.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Maintain residual prime wildlife habitat areas within the Rocky Provincial Grazing Reserve. Use developed fields for put-and-take pheasant hunting.	Resident elk herd is being maintained, as well as deer, moose, bear and ruffed grouse, although total numbers are lower than in the past. Put-and-take pheasant hunting was discontinued because of a lack of adequate feed to sustain released birds.

To increase non-consumptive use of elk and sheep that winter in townsite areas(RMA C).Wildlife sanctuary status was proposed to eliminate hunting in this area.	The sanctuary proposal was not approved.
To gather more detailed information on the distribution and density of wildlife in the planning area. Improved population information would allow better informed decisions regarding resolutions of land use conflicts and development of new program initiatives.	Departmental budget reductions have prevented initiation of any new surveys. A routine moose survey was conducted in the Rose Creek-Red Deer RMA.
Encourage registered trappers to increase harvest of wolves to reduce predation on ungulates. Reduced wolf densities should allow ungulates to increase and thereby increase potential for success of ungulates by licensed hunters.	Trappers were provided with additional bait and lure oil; the wolf harvest was increased threefold to approximately 25 animals. Sport hunting harvest statistics are not yet available, but it does not appear that success rates have improved this past year.
Increase in elk densities in Wildlife Management Unit 324(RMA C). Increased elk numbers would improve their visibility for recreationists.	Only 15 cow elk permits were issued in this wildlife management unit.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

1) Maintain remaining wildlife habitats in the Rocky Grazing Reserve and continue to use the area for recreational and subsistence hunting and trapping.

2) Routine sheep survey in RMA C.

3) Trappers will be provided with road-killed ungulates to use as trap bait.

4) The number of cow elk permits will be maintained or reduced slightly.

B) PROBLEM WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To develop and implement systems for resolving problem wildlife situations within the planning area.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Ungulates are to be managed at densities that can be tolerated by the agricultural community while still maintaining viable populations and recreational opportunities. Crop damage is very dependant on winter severity and ungulate densities. Some crop damage is expected following a hard winter. This could have been reduced through fencing and compensation would be paid where appropriate.	No depredation occurred due to the mild winter and relatively low ungulate densities.
Maintain bear densities at optimum levels understood by maintaining recreational bear hunting and by resolving depredation problems through trapping and relocation. trapping.	Sixty-five bear complaints were processed and 35 bears were relocated or destroyed.
Maintain wolves at relatively low densities in the eastern portion of the planning area(RMA A,B,C) in order to minimize livestock depredation. To address wolf depredation complaints through compensating livestock owners, or through trapping or poisoning wolves in agricultural areas.	One chronic problem site was identified in the Faraway area. Trappers were encouraged to take more wolves, compensation claims are being processed and some poisoning is being conducted.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

1)Ungulate depredation problems will be addressed through fencing,compensation or intercept feeding.

2)Bear depredation problems will be addressed in a manner similar to 1986/87.

3)Wolf depredation problems will be addressed in a manner similar to 1986/87.

C) WILDLIFE RE-INTRODUCTION

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To re-introduce selected native wildlife species, through transplant programs, into portions of the Rocky-North Saskatchewan Integrated Resource Plan where populations are low or non-existent.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Increased recreational viewing opportunities and fur revenues from the re-introduction of river otter to their former range along the North Saskatchewan River(RMA C).	Because of budgetary restrictions, no activity has occurred on this project.

D) WILDLIFE HABITAT INVENTORY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To collect baseline wildlife habitat information on public lands to assist in review of land use applications. In addition, such inventory data could be used to determine potential for habitat enhancement on public lands.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To inventory White Area public lands within the planning area. Conduct inventory of wildlife habitat values in the Rose Creek proposed agriculture expansion area.	Approximately 70 percent of the White Area public lands in the planning area have been inventoried to date. Aerial surveys of ungulates have been conducted in portions of the area proposed for agricultural expansion: however, other priorities and shortages of budget and manpower have prevented any ground inventories thus far.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Based on the availability of budgets and manpower, White Area public land inventories, as well as inventories in the agriculture expansion area, may be activated in 1988/89.

E) UNGULATE RANGE MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To undertake an evaluation of specific ungulate ranges where concerns exist regarding forage allocation between domestic livestock and wild ungulates. Undertake resolution of allocation issues in co-operation with Public Lands Division and/or Alberta Forest Service.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To conduct range evaluation and allocation resolution for the South Fork Allotment.	1) Because of the lack of manpower and budgets, plus redefinition of priorities, the assessment on the South Fork Allotment has not been undertaken.

2) A brief assessment of the Rough Creek Allotment (which lies partially within the North Saskatchewan R. RMA) was conducted because of a pending change in allotment holder.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

No specific range evaluations are planned by the Fish and Wildlife Division in 1988/89 as a result of budget and manpower limitations as well as other priorities. Any work done in this area over the next year will likely occur only on an emergency need basis.

F) WILDLIFE HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To expand the program of wildlife habitat enhancement in the planning area. The program is aimed at improving the quality and quantity of suitable habitats for a range of wildlife species, but at present primarily focuses on big game species and birds where demand exceeds supply. Projects are planned to result in increased numbers and improved distribution of desired wildlife species within the planning area. The ultimate goal of this work is to ensure maintenance of and/or increases in opportunities for recreational use of wildlife by the public.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Delivery of projects to enhance ungulate forage production.	Medicine Lake Moose Range Enhancement - Rimbey Fish and Game Association undertook two projects of mechanical clearing on decadent willow patches to rejuvenate moose browse. Project areas totalled 85 ha distributed over numerous small clearings. (Rose Creek-Red Deer RMA).
Delivery of projects to assist in maintenance and improvement of diversity in plant communities.	Gosling Lake Moose Range Enhancement - Hoadley Trappers Association conducted mechanical clearing on 50 ha of old willow to rejuvenate moose browse. (Rose Creek-Red Deer RMA).
Delivery of projects to meet key habitat requirements of certain wildlife species.	Nest Box Project - Approximately 700 bluebird nest boxes, 300 duck and hawk nest boxes and 30 bird feeders were constructed through the Buck for Wildlife Program. Installation was conducted by various school groups and clubs (Rose Creek-Red Deer, North Saskatchewan, Prairie Creek RMAs).

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Conduct phase III of Medicine Lake Moose Range enhancement (Rose Creek-Red Deer).

Installation of 30 goose nesting bales in area west of Rimbey (Rose Creek-Red Deer).

Additional wildlife habitat enhancement projects as budget permits.

6. FISHERIES

The fisheries resource in the planning area is managed to provide a variety of recreational and commercial opportunities by:

a) maintaining or increasing natural fish populations;
b) establishing new populations in suitable areas;
c) protecting or enhancing habitat;
d) providing suitable access; and
e) establishing and satisfying user demand.

The resource is managed by the Fish and Wildlife Division, Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife.

A) FISHERIES INVENTORY/MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To continue a comprehensive field level fisheries inventory program to collect data required for making management decisions. Management plans will provide long-term direction for angling regulations, stocking requirements and any potential habitat protection or enhancement needs. Efforts will be directed at maintaining viable, self-sustaining fish populations to provide for an optimal level and diversity of recreational angling opportunities. The highest priority will be placed on maintaining self-sustaining populations of native species.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Conduct inventories of streams and lakes within the planning area(as budget and priorities permit), identify critical habitats, determine population levels and identify water bodies with stocking potential.	1. Twin Lakes was test netted and electrofished to determine trout abundance. Few trout were found in the lake resulting in a marginal fishery. Predation by birds and competition with coarse fish are suspected as being the major causes of this problem(RMA C). 2. The spawning reef at Swan Lake was evaluated. It appears that the structure is working, as lake trout were concentrated around the reef and eggs were found deposited on the site(RMA B).
Evaluate the effects of altered discharges on	No activity.

the North Saskatchewan and lower Brazeau River fisheries(RMA C).	
Development of management plans for key lakes and streams within the planning area.	None completed.
Evaluate harvest of sportfish in the planning area by conducting angler surveys on selected lakes and streams and by reviewing surveys done in other planning areas.	1. An angler harvest survey was conducted on Twin Lakes. Results indicate the fishery is marginal in this waterbody. 2. Angler harvest surveys were also conducted on Cow, Mitchell, and Strubel Lakes within the planning area.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

1) New inventories will be undertaken as budgets permit. No plans have yet been developed.

2) No evaluation of altered discharges on the North Saskatchewan is anticipated this year.

3) Action on angler surveys in this planning area will depend on availability of temporary manpower for 1988/89. The priority for fisheries work in the region over the next year relates to evaluation of the benefits derived from the new sport fishing regulations. The majority of this evaluation will likely occur outside of the RNS-IRP area, but results will influence management decisions for the fishery of this planning area.

B) FISH STOCKING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To stock identified lakes and streams within the planning area to maintain and enhance sport-fishing opportunities.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To stock:	Following stocking program was delivered:
1) Cow Creek with brown trout, 2) Cow, Struble and Twin lakes with rainbow trout, 3) Mitchell and Rat lakes with brook trout, 4) Mud Creek with brown trout, 5) Grey Owl, Rapid and Stevens creeks with brown trout,	1) Baptiste River – 20 000 brown trout, 2) Brewster Creek – 9 000 brown trout, 3) Cow Lake – 7 730 Rainbow trout, 4) Ironside Pond – 1 310 rainbow

6) Jackfish and McGregor Lakes with walleye.

trout,

5) Lawrence Cr. Ponds - 5 000,
6) Mitchell Lake - 16 000,
7) No Name Cr. Dams - 10 000 brown trout,
8) Open Cr. Res. - 12 000 rainbow trout,
9) Prentice Creek Dams - 1 500 brown trout,
10) Rat Lake - 4 000 brook trout,
11) Rose Creek Dams - 4 000 brown trout,
12) Ruth Creek Dams - 3 000 brown trout,
13) Struble Lake - 19 000 rainbow trout,
14) Twin Lakes - 9 500 rainbow trout.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

To stock;

Cow Lake	300 000 rainbow trout
Mitchell Lake	17 500 brook trout
Open Creek Reservoir	12 000 rainbow trout
Phyllis Lake	11 000 rainbow trout
Rat Lake	4 000 brook trout
Rocky Children's Pond	1 000 rainbow trout
Struble Lake	19 000 rainbow trout
Alford Lake	3 000 rainbow trout
Tay Lake	5 000 rainbow trout
Twin Lake	10 000 rainbow trout
Harlech Pond	500 rainbow trout

Certain lakes and streams are on a 2 to 5 year cycle of stocking and will not receive fish every year. The stocking program on the Baptiste River system will concentrate on establishing a self-sustaining brown trout population.

C) FISHERIES HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To continue to expand a program of fisheries habitat enhancement and development within the planning area. These projects will assist in increasing sport-fish populations and

recreational angling opportunities within the planning area. Such programs as streambank fencing, fish pond creation and instream habitat improvement will continue as the main methods of accomplishing these enhancement goals.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Maintain and enhance Open Creek Reservoir; Continue streambank fencing on key streams; Develop put-and-take fisheries where required; Deliver other fisheries enhancement projects as proposed.	Rocky Children's Pond - this pond was deepened and enlarged to improve fish survival potential (North Sask. RMA). Nordegg Pond Fertilization - Trout Unlimited has conducted two introductions of organic nutrients to Harlech Pond in an attempt to improve growth rates of stocked fish. (North Sask. RMA). Project Maintenance - Annual inspections and maintenance are conducted by staff on streambank fences and water control structures on Buck for Wildlife Projects. Vetch Creek Fencing - Three streambank fencing projects were conducted on Vetch Creek resulting in shoreline control on 2.9 km of stream (Prairie Creek RMA). Prairie Creek Fencing - Three streambank fencing projects were conducted on Prairie Creek resulting in shoreline control on 1.2 km of stream (Prairie Creek RMA). Open Creek Reservoir - Through Buck for Wildlife funding, necessary repairs were conducted on the spillway of the Open Creek Dam in 1985. (Rose Creek- Red Deer RMA). Mud Creek Fencing - One kilometre of stream was fenced along this creek in 1985.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Harlech Pond Enrichment - Trout Unlimited will complete the third and final addition of nutrients into this stocked fish pond.

Open Creek Reservoir - In co-operation with Alberta Environment, additional repairs will be undertaken on the channel below the Open Creek Dam spillway.

Rocky Children's Pond - Arrange for site maintenance at this location.

Vetch Creek Fencing - Complete negotiations for fencing of streambanks on two quarter sections

along this creek.

Project Maintenance - Conduct annual maintenance program on fisheries projects within the planning area.

Other Projects - conduct feasibility studies and undertake fisheries enhancement projects as identified within the planning area.

D) FISHERIES HABITAT INVENTORY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To continue field inventories of instream and riparian physical habitat conditions on key streams in the planning area. Inventories will concentrate on recording present habitat conditions as well as identifying physical limitations that could be corrected through enhancement projects. Habitat requiring protection will be identified, and potential enhancement projects, directed at increasing fish populations, will be noted.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Production of inventory reports on key streams. Inventory streams in the proposed agriculture expansion area.	1) Habitat inventory of Vetch Creek was conducted in co-operation with Trout Unlimited to identify fisheries habitat limitations and any potential habitat enhancement projects. 2) Because of a shortage of staff and budgets, field inventories in the Rose Creek study area have not been initiated.

7. RECREATION

Recreation management includes the provision of facilities and services to a diverse user community. Facilities for camping, staging areas, trails, auto access, etc. are managed for hikers, skiers, off-highway vehicle users, equestrians and others. Services include operation, maintenance and upgrading of existing areas.

The Alberta Forest Service and Public Lands Division, Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife are responsible for the management of both recreation facilities and services in the planning area.

A) COMMERCIAL

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To prepare a provincial policy addressing commercial recreation management in backcountry locations in order to establish direction for allocation of base camps and staging areas for commercial operators.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Development and approval of provincial policy.	Draft policy under review by senior management.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Approval of final policy.

B) CAMPGROUNDS AND STAGING AREAS

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Campground management includes provision for new areas as defined by demand, as well as maintenance of existing sites. These services are to be provided as a low-cost alternative to more elaborate accommodation both within and outside of the planning area.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Maintenance and upgrading to standards of existing AFS recreation facilities.	Recreation area upgrading Strachan(RMA B) - Completed 1987 South Fork(RMA B) - Completed 1986 Mitchell Lk(RMA B) - Completed 1987 Jackfish Lake(RMA D) - Plan approved 1987 Phyllis Lk(RMA B) - Draft Plan 1987
Construction of group campground at Medicine Lake(RMA A).	No activity because of budget constrai ts.
Staging area and trail construction for motorized recreation in the Baseline area(RMA B).	No activity because of budget constraints.
Construction of one or two water access points on the North Saskatchewan River downstream from Rocky Mountain House.	No activity because of budget constraints.
Construction of fisheries access points where required (Ironside Pond, Strubel Lake(RMA B).	Strubel Lake water access - Commenced 1987 Ironside Pond water access - Draft plan 1987

C) EQUESTRIAN/HIKING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To provide facilities as required that capitalize on the unique features of the planning area in a cost-effective and environmentally sound manner.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Cross country ski trail development Ferrier area(RMA A).	No work to date. Poor snow conditions over the last few years have reduced demand.

D) VISITOR USE

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To monitor visitor use so that it is possible to anticipate changes in user requirements for facilities and services.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Continue with user statistics/surveys recreation areas.	User statistics and surveys - ongoing.

Random recreation survey - completed.

Total Seasonal Use by Recreation Area

Rec. Area	1986	1985	1984
	(no. of groups)		
Swan Lk.	1802	1580	1484
Saunders	139	155	98
Harlech	682	964	—
Shunda V.P.	212	—	—
Prairie Ck.	3503	3356	2600
Cow Lake	2616	569	—
Strachan	2356	1367	1594
Mitchell Lk.	266	135	—
Strubel Lk.	—	—	—
Southfork	66	363	579
Medicine Lk.	4403	3445	3280
Chambers Ck.	1438	1710	1755
Horburg	827	495	—
Jackfish Lk.	553	483	566
TOTAL	18 863	14 622	12 825
Change	+29%	+14%	—

Use is increasing yearly throughout the planning area.

User Origin by Market Area

Year	Primary	Secondary	Outside
1986	65.3%	26.7%	8.0%
1985	54.3%	32.6%	13.1%
1984	56.6%	34.8%	8.6%

These results indicate that use by visitors from the primary market area (all populations within one hour driving time of the planning area) is increasing. However, use by visitors from the secondary market area (populations between one and two hours drive from the planning area) is decreasing. Use by visitors from outside the market area is remains static.

USER ORIGIN 1986

Primary Market	
- Planning Area	39%
- Red Deer	26.3%
Secondary Market	
- Calgary	10.3%
- Edmonton	12.0%
- Other	4.0%
Outside Market	
- In Province	7.0%
- Out of Province	0.9%
- Out of Country	0.5%
Total	100.0%

During 1986, almost 40% of the visitors to the planning area were within a one hour drive.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Continue user surveys in recreation areas.

Continue random recreation surveys to monitor resource use at undeveloped sites.

E) PLANNING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To provide recreational opportunities to the public that capitalize on the unique and beautiful characteristics of the planning area.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To prepare a refined and specific resource management and development plan for the appropriate uses of land and resources within the planning area.	The David Thompson Corridor Local Integrated Resource Plan has commenced (Figure 2). The terms of reference for the plan have been completed and planning has begun.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

The plan is to be completed for public review during the current year.

F) COW LAKE WATER ACCESS POINT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

Continue to provide public access to Cow Lake(RMA B) and maintain the site for day use only.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Improve existing site to accommodate increased user demands.	The site was upgraded in October, 1987 by increasing the parking area, enlarging the boat launch, installing cement pump-out tanks for washrooms, repairing or constructing additional boat docking structures, reclaiming unauthorized random camping sites and constructing some V-ditches to reduce random unauthorized camping.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Maintain the site as a day use site.

Encourage overnight campers to use the newly constructed Cow Lake Recreation Area on the west side of the lake.

8. FORAGE RESOURCE

The forage resource in the planning area occurs primarily along its eastern boundary. It is administrated by both the Public Lands Division and the Alberta Forest Service.

A) ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE PROVINCIAL GRAZING RESERVE

MANAGEMENT INTENT

The primary purpose of the grazing reserve is to provide grazing privileges to farmers and ranchers. Small, medium and new farming operations are given special consideration.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To supply grazing for 1350 cow/calf units (or equivalent) with sufficient bull coverage for 51 patrons. Maintain death losses below 1%.	1308 cow/calf units from 51 patrons were grazed in 1987 and death losses were 0.7%.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Increase carrying capacity by 50 cow/calf units or equivalent during 1988 and maintain losses at less than 1%.

B) STOCKING LEVELS

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To maintain the 1977 stocking levels within the Eastern Slopes on a sustainable basis by improving range conditions and stock management.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Close monitoring of stocking rates and assessing range condition.	In the White Area, there was a total of 126 grazing lease dispositions covering 66 670 acres, providing grazing for 15 698 AUMs.
Update Grazing Management Plan.	In the White Area, a total of 10 grazing permit dispositions covering 2 817 acres were authorized, providing grazing for 623 AUMs. These current figures vary slightly from the IRP document.
Develop and update grazing management plans.	Holbrook Plan completed.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Update Rough Creek Plan
Update Prairie Creek Plan
Update North Ram Plan
Update South Fork Plan
Update Diamond Hill Plan
Update Omini Range Plan

C) LAND EVALUATION/PLANNING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To assess the potential of public lands in the White Area to enhance range capability.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To evaluate public lands for improvement potential, upon the lessee's/permittee's request.	Ten new range development programs were implemented and planned development phases on existing range improvement programs continued.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Evaluate and impliment new range improvement projects as applications are submitted. Continue with committed development phases on existing range improvement projects.

9. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE

The agricultural resource refers to public lands which are currently, or have the potential for, tilled cropping. Assessment and public land management of the resource is the responsibility of the Public Lands Division.

A) HWY 22 CORRIDOR AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY STUDY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To assess the potential for agricultural development on a tract of land one mile on either side of Hwy 22 located in Twp.44-41, Rge 6-7, W5.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Complete a soils and vegetation inventory by using existing resource data on lands with potential for cultivation or improved grazing. Lands with timber that are located within the O'chiese Block of the Brazeau Timber Development Area will not be considered	A reconnaissance of the study area (approximately 11 332 ha has been completed. Recommendations on land allocation have been forwarded to senior management.

for agricultural development.

B) ROSE CREEK AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY STUDY

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To assess the potential for agricultural development in a block of land (approximately 16 188 ha) located in Twp.44-47, Rge 7-9, W5.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Complete a detailed soils inventory and a climate monitoring assessment for the study area.	Completion of a five year temperature and precipitation data collection from five climate stations. Detailed soils reports were completed for the approximately 16 188 ha study area. A recommendation on land allocation has been made to senior management.

10. ECOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife, Alberta Recreation and Parks and Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism all have roles in identifying and managing natural features, landscapes, ecosystems and historical resources.

A) PRESERVATION

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To protect and manage the resources to preserve their unique characteristics. This may involve placing protective notations, writing management plans, phasing out existing non-conforming uses, or proposing Natural Area designations.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Natural areas will have a protective notation placed on them. This is to ensure that their special characteristics will be protected.	All sites except one (i.e., McGregor Lake) within this integrated resource plan boundary that are designated as natural areas have a protective notation. A new Natural Area has been created near Alexo. The Red Deer Big Brothers were the sponsoring agency.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Create a Natural Area on an ecologically significant area that has been identified adjacent the O'Chiese Indian Reserve.

Management plans will be prepared for the McGregor Lake and Alexo Natural Areas.

11. ACCESS

The co-ordination of access development while minimizing impact on other resources and reducing duplication of effort and expense is the responsibility of the Alberta Forest Service and the Public Lands Division, assisted by the Fish and Wildlife Division.

A) ACCESS MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To implement systems of managing public use of new access routes. Efforts are required to maintain adequate areas of habitat which provide security for major wildlife species.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
The Designated Routes Concept was originally proposed for testing within the planning area; however, the decision was made to select a site in the Brazeau/Pembina Planning Area. This test area has been subsequently dropped.	Although the Designated Routes Project has not been undertaken, some efforts to manage new access have occurred at the operational level. Physical closure of new access has been undertaken at specific sites within key wildlife habitat areas.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Continue with operational level initiatives to manage new access on a site-specific basis where current policy allows.

12. LAND USE ADMINISTRATION

Land use is a common term for all activities which relate to the administration of resource uses of the land. These activities are the responsibility of the Alberta Forest Service and Public Lands Division, and are intended to ensure compliance with the management intents outlined in the plan.

A) LAND USE PLANNING

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To adjust the land status changes within the planning area with respect to the Green/White Area lands.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
To proceed with the Green/White Area boundary change which will remove approximately 20 235 ha from the Green Area. These lands, which are added to the White Area, will be made available for resource uses that optimize use of the land base.	Completed in all areas excepting the Rose Creek and Highway 22 areas where the land allocation decision is pending.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Once the Rose Creek Agriculture Capability Study report is endorsed by the department, the Green\White Area boundary will be adjusted accordingly.

B) DAVID THOMPSON CORRIDOR LOCAL IRP

MANAGEMENT INTENT

The David Thompson Corridor Local Integrated Resource Plan was initiated to:

1) prepare a refined and specific resource management and development plan for the appropriate uses of land and resources within the planning area;

2) identify appropriate conservation priorities along the corridor; and

3) provide appropriate guidance for preparation of the implementation of the plan following final approval.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Planning for the David Thompson Corridor.	A land use plan for the corridor adjacent to Highway 11 has been proposed and initiated. A nine-member planning team with representation from Alberta Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife, Public Lands(all part of Alberta Forestry,Lands and Wildlife), Alberta Recreation and Parks, Alberta Tourism, Alberta Transportation and Utilities, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, the Municipal District of Clearwater and the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission, has been established. The terms of reference have been completed and publicly distributed for comment.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

The plan will be released for public review during the current year.

C) REFERRALS

MANAGEMENT INTENT

To provide input to government referral systems dealing with applications for use of public lands in the planning area.

RESULTS EXPECTED	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Provide input to 32 referral systems including those with the Department of Forestry, Lands and Wildlife as well as several other government departments.	Input respecting protection of fish and wildlife resources has been provided through the referral systems of the government. Major activities requiring review are oil and gas exploration and development, and timber harvesting in the eastern half of the planning area.

ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES(1988/89)

Continue with involvement in land use referral system.

13. SUMMARY

The implementation of the Rocky/North Saskatchewan Integrated Resource Plan is on schedule. Key highlights of the implementation are;

1) Protection- the continued emphasis on the creation of new natural areas, particularly near the O'Chiese Uplands and Alexo.

- continued emphasis on meeting the high reforestation standards of the province.

- continued emphasis on early detection and suppression of wildfire.

2) Management- Maintenance and upgrading of range stocking capability.

- The stocking of over 100 000 fish in lakes in the planning area, with the potential of over 300 000 being stocked in the area during the coming year.

- The upgrading of five recreation sites including campgrounds, access points and day use sites.

3) Development – The Forest Management Agreement with Pelican Spruce Mills of Drayton Valley which is making use the aspen resource as well as coniferous species.

If you have any comments relating to this report, please contact:

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